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The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Identical letters dated 10 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write to inform you and the members of the international community of a vicious and devastating act of terrorism, which occurred in our capital city of Jerusalem last week.

Late Thursday evening, 6 March 2008, a terrorist infiltrated the Mercaz Harav yeshiva (rabbinical seminary) and opened fire on a crowded library and study hall, killing eight young men: Segev Peniel Avihail, 15; Neria Cohen, 15; Yonatan Yitzhak Eldar, 16; Yehonadav Haim Hirschfeld, 19; Yohai Lifshitz, 18; Doron Meherete, 26; Avraham David Moses, 16; Ro'i Roth, 18. Eleven others were wounded during the attack. The victims of this terrorist attack, most of them teenage boys, have been stolen away from this world, their families, and their people. They were coldly and callously murdered just footsteps away from the seat of the Israeli Government and our most cherished religious, educational, and cultural institutions, in the Kiryat Moshe neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

My delegation notes with appreciation the Secretary-General's unqualified condemnation of this terrorist attack, and the efforts of the President of the Security Council and other members of the Council to condemn the attack and steward the international community towards adopting a statement deploring this act of terrorism, as it has done in so many previous situations. But the Council could not reach consensus due to the politicized opposition of one member in particular, which is highly disturbing and greatly disappointing. Surely, there can be no excuse or explanation for this terrorist attack, and any attempt to justify terrorism — by blocking its condemnation — is disingenuous, counter-productive, and morally reprehensible.

At the same time, my delegation greatly appreciates the numerous expressions of sympathy shared with us by Member States and those in the Secretariat during the past few days.

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I should be grateful if you would have the contents of this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 17 and 18, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dan **Gillerman**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative